

The Mystery of The Devil's Ace

Or, The Manor Mystery

By Fergus Hume

Author of "The Mystery of a Hansom Cab."

SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.
Rich Sir John Newby has a twin brother, Richard, who is a secretary. Newby's murdered body is found in a secret room under the tower of an English manor house owned by Francis Clair. In this room, centuries earlier, Clair's ancestor won the manor by playing the "Devil's Ace." Clair is poor. He has planned for his daughter Dorothy to wed Sir John. She is engaged to Percy Hallon, a young engineer, who lives with her friends, Wilhelmina and Billy Minter. At the inquest, testimony is given by Mrs. Hallon, Newby's eccentric housekeeper. Wilhelmina suspects Clair of the murder, the crime having been committed with a knife he used to own. Count Beskoff, a Russian nihilist, hearing that Clair has inherited a large income from Sir John, comes to the manor to seek funds for the revolutionary cause in Russia. He tries to blackmail Clair by accusing him of Newby's murder. Hallon seeks to solve the mystery and meets Sir John alive. Sir John explains it was Richard who was slain. Suspicion of murdering Richard falls on Sir John. Beskoff, at Clair's order, is pursued by the police. Wilhelmina rescues him. She and the count fall in love with each other. A woman claiming to be Sir John's wife calls on Clair.

CHAPTER XIX. "Your Will!"

DOROTHY uttered an ejaculation of surprise. It was the belt from the blue hinted at in Willy's letter. It was the last link of bolt she expected to fall.

"Can you deny it, John?" asked the strange lady, speaking for the first time; and Dorothy noticed how distinct was her enunciation.

"I have already admitted it," said Newby, stolidly. "But I thought that you were dead long ago."

"Dead?" cried Miss Sanding, raising herself on tip-toe to produce an effect. "When I have been winning laurels in America!"

"There was that railway smash, you know," Sir John reminded her.

"I was in it, yes, I admit that I was in it. But I escaped safe in life and limb. A false report of my death was sent to England, and on that, I presume, you courted this young lady. But had you cared for me, John, you would have made inquiries, and would have learned the truth. But I returned a month ago to my Hampshire home, and heard of your death and afterwards of your return from the grave. Gossip, busy with your name, said that you were engaged to marry Miss Clair, the daughter of the owner of this Manor, so I came down to save her."

"Yes, yes," Newby said, strangely. "I am not angry with you in the least, Clair. Things looked black against me, I admit, but you will find later on that I am not quite a secondhand. Miss Clair! Lady Panwin!" He bowed politely.

"Good-by, Sir John," said Dorothy impulsively seizing his hand. "And I hope I'll see you again."

A Dark Hint.

"When my character is completely cleared, Good-by!"

Jules Schwytz, the Swiss butler, was a great favorite with the other servants in the Manor House.

Dorothy also liked Jules, who was always ready to do what she wanted. It occurred to her to send him to the Boho house. Being a foreigner, he might pick up useful information there. He agreed and departed, ostensibly on a "holiday."

But Jules never came back. Three days elapsed and still he was absent. Not a letter or a card, or even a telegram, came to explain why he had taken—very appropriately—French leave and great was the sorrow in the Manor kitchen for the loss of the favorite. Dorothy was seriously alarmed, as she thought that the poor little man might have got into trouble with the Anarchists.

"You must not think of going to Boho," she said to Hallon. "Perhaps Jules has been killed, and these horrid people would kill you."

"I shall certainly go," said Hallon, obstinately.

Willy was alone when Hallon came back, and immediately asked if Jules had been heard of.

"If I tell you something," she said slowly, "you must promise not to be angry?"

"No. How could I be angry with you? I have no right to be. What is it?"

Miss Minter wasted no time in fencing, but related the fight and the saving of Count Beskoff.

Willy handed him Count Beskoff's card. "You see that the address is in Boho. Now this may be the very house where Sir John was taken. Go there, and see Count Beskoff. He may be able to explain what has become of Jules."

It was after 5 o'clock when Hallon found himself in a shabby street in Boho, and at the door of a shabby house.

Caught!

A slim, olive-complexioned woman, distinctly French, opened the door, and when Percy, in her own tongue, asked for Count Beskoff, she not only admitted that he resided there, but showed him into a small, dingy room on the ground floor. When she went upstairs to tell the Russian about his visitor, Hallon glanced around the ill-smelling, ill-looking apartment, and wondered that so clean and smart a man as Beskoff, and an aristocrat at that, should inhabit so mean a dwelling.

Buried in these thoughts, Hallon, maddened by the dirty window, looking out on to the dirty, narrow street. Behind him the door was opened, and so quietly that he did not know anyone had entered until a shawl was thrown over his head. At once the young man gripped his revolver; but before he

could draw it many hands clasped him, and immediately afterwards a stunning blow on the head reduced him to unconsciousness. Hallon's last thought, as he fell to the ground, was that a third victim, in the person of himself, had been added to the Anarchistic list.

CHAPTER XX. In Disguise.

HUBSON, the rural constable, always complained that Beltan seemed to have a magnetic attraction for all sorts and conditions of tramps.

Billy Minter and his sister had their abode on the high road, and, therefore, found their cottage so infested by these undesirable creatures that oftentimes they made up their minds to remove. On the day that Percy Hallon went to London, on the quest which had ended so badly for him, Willy, returning from the Manor House at 6 o'clock, was accosted in the gloaming by a wild-looking figure in ragged garments and armed with a formidable cudgel.

Willy gasped, "Count Beskoff!"

"At your service, now and always," said the Count, graciously.

Willy hesitated no longer. Catching up her skirts, she walked swiftly along the road and Beskoff followed at a slow pace. The cottage was only a stone's throw distant, and Miss Minter, entering the gates, intimated that the so-called tramp should seat himself on the dry lawn while she went inside for food.

The Secret.

Shortly Miss Minter emerged with Billy at her heels. Brother and sister walked straight to where Beskoff lounged on the sward.

"Will you both promise to keep what I am about to tell you secret until I give you leave to speak?" asked Beskoff.

"Yes, yes!" broke in Willy quickly. "Then do you know if Jules Schwytz is alive?" asked Billy.

"And," added Willy, before the Count could speak, "Mr. Hallon, whom you have just seen, to the address you gave me, to see you, and inquire about Jules Schwytz."

"When?" asked Beskoff, quickly, and changed color.

"To-day—this afternoon."

Beskoff bit his lip. "I wish you had not given him that address, Miss Minter. There may be danger."

"Can't you save him?" asked Willy, turning white.

"I wish to tell both how I came to be connected with such a society. The history will not take me long."

"Go on," said Willy, looking at him intently.

"To be brief," said Beskoff, "I was born at Moscow, and my parents were wealthy and noble. Owing to the jealousy of a high official my father was accused of conspiracy and was exiled to Siberia. He escaped and returned. The police came after him, and he was captured in my mother's boudoir. In trying to defend him she was shot."

"Oh!" said Willy, in horror.

"Yes," said the Russian, and rose, his blue eyes blazing with swift anger, and looking like two sapphires. "You happy English people cannot understand what we suffer from corrupt government. My father returned to Siberia and died there in misery; my mother, as I say, was shot. My only sister and myself were turned out to starve in the streets, and our wealth was seized by the high official who had caused all the trouble, and then Anna disappeared."

"The Vowels."

There was a sympathetic silence. Then Billy spoke: "And this society?"

"It is called the Vowed Society, as I have explained," said Beskoff, rapidly. "I got money from my uncle, who, in fact, allowed me an income, not knowing that I am a member of the society. But I have joined it in the hope of aiding my country. Should I leave it I would be killed."

"Do you want to leave it?" said Willy, abruptly.

"Yes," said Beskoff, and brought his hand heavily on the table. "As soon as I can I hope to leave it, but I do so at the cost of my immediate death, unless—"

"Unless what?" asked Billy, deeply interested.

Beskoff started and passed his hand across his forehead. "Don't ask me that—yet," he said, significantly.

"How many members are there of this society?" asked Billy, bluntly.

"Only thirty, who are controlled by five more—A, E, I, O and U, as I told you—thirty-five members in all. The aim is to get money in any way, honestly or dishonestly, as occasion serves. We tried to inveigle Sir John Newby into our net, but he was chosen to do so, and therefore I came to know him. But he was too clever and would not do business with me. But Richard—"

"Then what is to be done?" asked Willy, anxiously.

Beskoff had assumed his disguise again, turned quickly. "I have told you, Miss Minter, I'll go up and see what I can do." He moved toward the door.

"As soon as I can, I shall write—only give me a week, to do what I can. Only one thing remains to be said. Should you hear nothing of me or Hallon or Jules within a week, search the vault."

"The same!" Beskoff opened the door. "The whole secret of these troubles, and I truly believe, of the murder itself, is to be found in the vault. Wait for a week, and then search. Good-by!" (To be continued.)

Magic in Odd Numbers.

EVEN in the matter of weighing groceries there seems a magic in odd numbers," said a housekeeper.

"Most of the packages of salt, sugar, coffee and other commodities that grocers keep on hand to facilitate trade contain an odd number of pounds."

"You are in a hurry and ask for a made-up package of almost any kind of groceries tradesmen can accommodate you with a one-pound or two-pound or three-pound package; but the chances are that if you want two pounds or four pounds of anything it will have to be weighed."

Pres. Roosevelt's Own Story of Hunting the Buffalo



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"SPLITTING THE HERD"

(Continued from First Page.)

open glade. Behind them rose the dark pines. At the left of the glade the ground fell away to form the side of a chasm; down in the depths the cataracts foamed and thundered beyond, the huge mountains towered, their crests crimsoned by the stinking sun.

Mixed with the eager excitement of the hunter was a certain half-melancholy feeling as I gazed on these bison, themselves part of the last remnant of a doomed and nearly vanished race. Few, indeed, are the men who now have, or evermore shall have, the chance of seeing the mightiest of the American beasts, in all its wild vigor, surrounded by the tremendous desolation of his far-off mountain home.

At last, when I had begun to grow very anxious lest the others should take alarm, the bull likewise appeared on the edge of the glade, and stood with outstretched head, scratching his throat against a young tree, which shook violently. I aimed low, behind his shoulder, and pulled trigger.

At the crack of the rifle all the bison, without the momentary halt of terror, struck surprise so common among game, turned and raced off at headlong speed. The fringe of young pines beyond and below the glade cracked and swayed as if a whirlwind were passing, and in another moment they reached the top of a steep incline, thickly strewn with boulders and dead timber. Down this they plunged with reckless speed; their surefootedness was a marvel in such seemingly unwieldy beasts. A column of dust obscured their passage, and under its cover they disappeared in the forest; but the trail of the bull was marked by splashes of frothy blood, and we followed it at a trot. Fifty yards beyond the border of the forest we found the stark black body stretched motionless.

He was a splendid old bull, still in his full vigor, with large, sharp horns and heavy mane and glossy coat; and I felt the most exulting pride as I handled and examined him; for I had procured a trophy such as can fall henceforth to few hunters indeed.

It was too late to dress the beast that evening; so, after taking out the tongue and cutting off enough meat for supper and breakfast, we scrambled

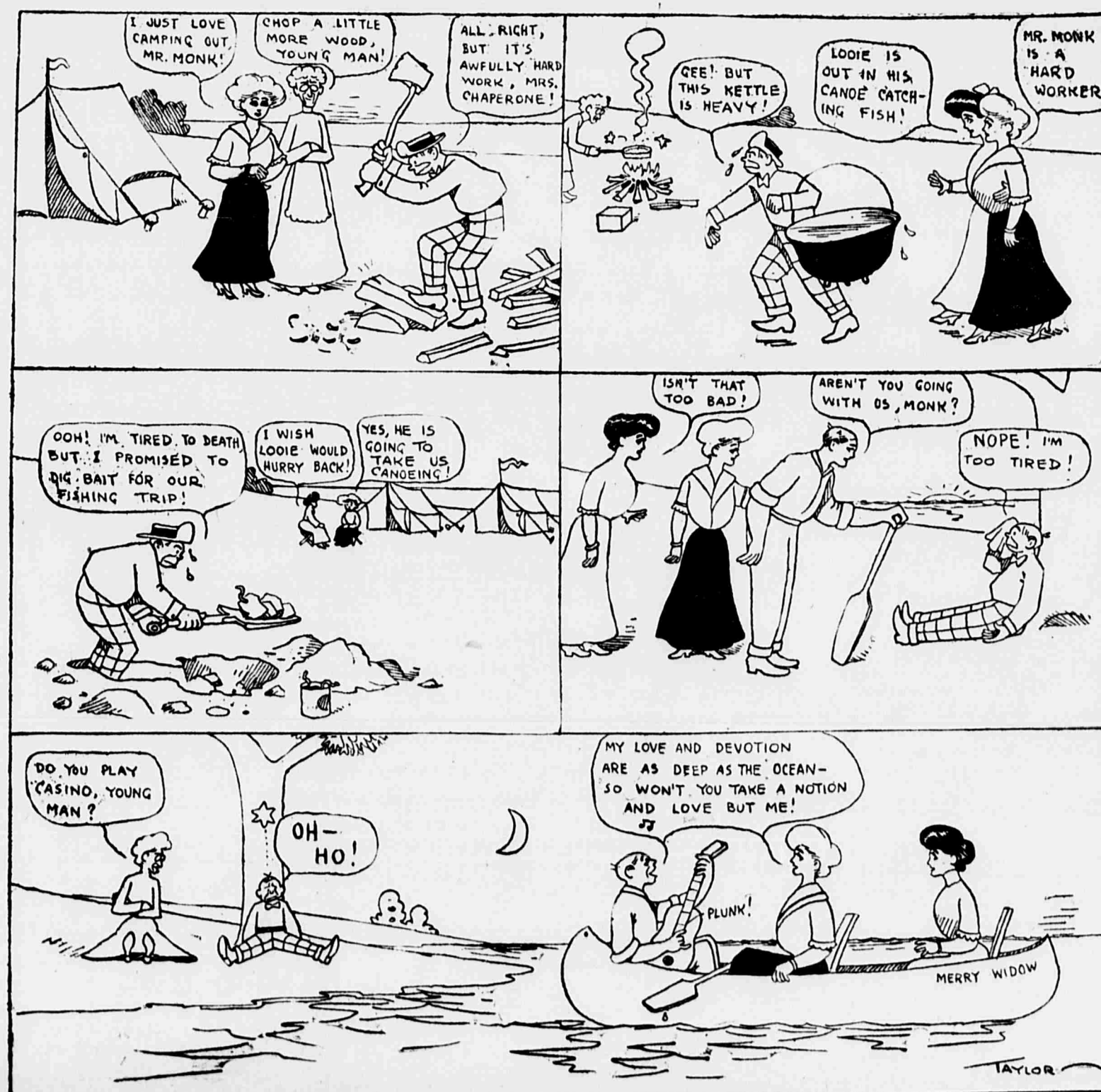
down near to the torrent, and at some search found a good spot for camping. Hot and dusty from the day's hard tramp, I undressed and took a plunge in the stream, the joy of water making me gasp. Then, having built a slight lean-to of brush, and dragged together enough dead timber to burn all night, we cut long and swift, sat down before some embers piled apart, and grilled and ate our buffalo meat with the utmost relish.

Night had fallen; a cold wind blew up the valley; the torrent roared as it leaped past and drowned our words as we strove to talk over our adventures and success; while the flame of the fire flickered and danced, lighting up with continual vivid flashes the gloom of the forest round about.

STORY No. 3.
Fights with Grizzlies
Will Appear in
Saturday's Evening World.

The Million Dollar Kid

By R. W. Taylor



Ways for Girls to Earn a Living

By RHETA CHILDE DORR.

Mrs. RHETA CHILDE DORR here replies to questions about girls' work from Evening World readers, and gives advice and information concerning different employments.

Free Stenography.

Dear Mrs. Dor: I KINDLY tell me of free classes in stenography where a girl can continue her studies through the summer. I heard that you had given this information, but I have not been able to get the paper. H. W.

I do refer to free summer classes at the Hebrew Technical School for Girls, but in this I was mistaken. I have since learned that the free classes there are only open to the pupils who have been attending through the winter. There are no public school trade classes in the summer, I regret to say.

Costume Designing.

Dear Mrs. Dor: YOU tell me where I can learn costume designing? I am sixteen and have spent a year in High School. Am I qualified to enter a trade school? L. G. M.

There is no such thing in this country as costume designing, and naturally the schools do not teach it. Costume design illustration is another thing. It is one of the highest branches of commercial art and you may attend classes at the Manhattan Trade School for girls, No. 206 East Twenty-third street, or at the Washington Irving High School. You will be taught to draw or paint from a design made in Paris or Vienna, a picture of a costume on an attractive figure. The figure and all the details of the costume will be your work. Sixteen is a good age to enter trade classes, and your year in high school is a great advantage.

Proofreading.

Dear Mrs. Dor: I WOULD like information concerning proofreading, its requirements, its pay. How shall I obtain a position? I have a high school education. L. F., Glen Ridge, N. J.

Proofreading is a part of the printer's trade, and formerly a man or woman had to be a practical printer in order to be a proofreader. Now the requirements are not quite so rigid. One must have an exceptionally good knowledge of English, especially spelling, punctuation and grammar. The proofreader must be able to detect the most obscure errors. She should have some knowledge of French and German, although this is not absolutely essential. Apply for a position as copy-

holder in a printing office, publishing house or newspaper office. The copyholder reads the copy to the proofreader, who does the correcting. In time the copyholder learns the proof marks, the rather complicated vocabulary and the general minutiae of the trade. Wages vary from \$10 to \$20 a week. A high school education should be sufficient.

Writing Poetry.

Dear Mrs. Dor: WHAT chances are there for a young lady aged twenty-five with a talent for writing poetry? I am told that this talent could be put to good use. E. F.

It could, if the poetry is really good. You can find this out only by sending some of it to the magazines. Have the verses typewritten if possible, and inclose a stamped and self-addressed letter for reply. Send to one magazine after another, and if none of them accept the verses you will have to conclude that you can't write yet. But that need not mean that you cannot learn to write. Try again.

Demonstrating.

Dear Mrs. Dor: I AM a young lady of seventeen, with fair education, qualified for employment as a demonstrator? What course of study is necessary, and where should I apply for a position?

Most of the demonstrators I have seen in the grocery departments of the big stores appear older than seventeen. However, if you can do the work I don't think your youth a serious handicap. There is no special course of study. Did you have domestic science in the public schools? Many demonstrators have to cook, you know, and all have to handle domestic utensils.

Embalming.

Dear Mrs. Dor: WHAT are the requirements for a young lady of forty years old, and have two children to educate. I think I should like that work. Are there schools where it is taught? If there are schools they are private ones in connection with large undertaking establishments. Why not call on one of these and inquire? I understand that a number of women find employment as undertakers' assistants at good pay.

Betty Vincent's Advice On Courtship and Marriage

Ask Her to Wait.

Dear Betty: I AM twenty-one and am in love with a very nice girl who loves me. She is willing to get married if I make a better salary. I am now making \$12 per week. As things have been so hard, I have done all I could to get a better position, but have not succeeded. I am afraid that some other fellow may come along and take this dear girl, which would break my heart. Can you advise what to do? W. T.

Tell the young lady you have tried to get a better position, but that at present it is impossible. Ask her if she is willing to wait for a year or so until you are able to earn enough to support a wife. Besides, you are too young to

marry now, and even if your salary were sufficient, I would not advise you to marry at present.

He Should Apologize.

Dear Betty: I AM twenty-two. Six months ago I met a young man five years my senior. He took me out many times and told me that he loved me. While calling one night he said something I did not like. I told him not to call again. Do you think I should wait for his love any more? C. R. D.

If the young man offended you seriously do not receive him again until he apologizes. If he does not do so I advise you to forget him as soon as possible by accepting attentions from some other man.

May Manton's Daily Fashions.

B OK plaited dresses for the younger girls give the long lines that are so desirable. They are simple and can be laundered with ease. This one includes short, loose sleeves and is worn over a separate gumpie. In the illustration the material is white linen with bands embroidered and piped with Copenhagen blue, while the gumpie beneath is of lawn, with the sleeves and the yoke of embroidery; but while Copenhagen blue on white is a pronounced favorite of the season, the little dress could be made from almost any reasonable material.

The quantity of material required for the medium size (eight years) is 4-8 yards 24, 8-14 yards 32 or 34-4 yards 44 inches wide, with 11-15 yards of banding for the dress, 11-15 yards 32 inches wide, with 11-15 yards of all-over embroidery for the gumpie.

Pattern No. 6004 is cut in sizes for girls of four, six, eight and ten years of age.



Girls' Box Plaited Dress With Gumpie—
Pattern No. 6004.

The Chorus Lady

By James Forbes

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